

FAQ: What you need to know about immigration, discrimination, and your rights at HISD

In light of the recent presidential election, many HISD families have questions about the possible impact a new administration may have on them personally. We strive to ensure that our schools are safe spaces where a student's race, ethnicity, religion, or immigration status do not create any barriers to that child's education. We have created this document to address some questions HISD families may have regarding their immigration status and our commitment to protect students from discrimination and harassment.

Q: What impact does undocumented immigration status have on my child's education?

A: None at all. All children have a constitutional right to equal access to education regardless of their immigration status or that of their parents. That right cannot be taken away by the president, the State of Texas, or Congress.

Q: Do HISD schools ask for information regarding a child's immigration status when he or she enrolls?

A: No. Public school districts like HISD are obligated to enroll students regardless of their immigration status and without discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin.

Q: Would HISD ever share a student's immigration status with federal immigration officials?

A: No. We do not collect this information or share it.

Q: What does HISD do to ensure that no student or family is discriminated against or harassed because of their race, ethnicity, religion, or national origin?

A: One of HISD's core values is a belief in equity. The district has policies in place that mandate no discrimination or harassment for HISD students, families, or employees on the base of race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, and many other protected classes.

Q: What should I do if I feel like I have been the victim of discrimination or harassment?

A: Please report the behavior immediately to a school leader, supervisor, or the superintendent. Complaints and concerns can be filed using the forms and procedures in Board Policy. See this HISD Board [document](#) for information on "Student Welfare and Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation." See this HISD Board [document](#) for information on "Employee Welfare and Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation." Both include instructions on how to report such abuse. We take these complaints very seriously in order to assure that our schools and offices continue to be safe spaces.

Q: What immediate impact will the election have on me or my family if we do not have lawful immigration status?

A: There will be no changes to the immigration laws before the incoming president takes office in January 2017. And even then, the immigration laws are passed by Congress, and there is no way to know for sure if Congress will make any changes to the immigration laws.

Q: What about if I am a DACA recipient?

A: Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) is based on an order by the president. The new president could choose to rescind that order. If you are a recipient of DACA, consider reaching out to an immigration attorney now in order to determine if you have access to a better form of immigration status. Additional information can be found [here](#) and on the Immigrant Legal Resource Center website.

Q: What should I do if I want to better understand my immigration rights?

A: Only immigration attorneys can provide you with accurate advice about immigration status and how you can pursue your legal rights. For your own protection, please do not seek the advice of [notarios](#) or others who are not licensed immigration attorneys.

A list of available resources can be found in the HISD Community Resource Guide. Click on this [page](#), and under “Topic,” use the drop-down menu to locate “Citizenship and Immigration.” You can refine your search by ZIP code, cost, etc., or you can just hit “Submit” for a long list of attorneys, community services, City of Houston assistance, etc.

You can also seek an immigration attorney from the American Immigration Lawyers Association [here](#) (English) or [here](#) (Spanish).